Making Benefits Easier to Understand **Across a Complex, Multi-State Workforce**

Story Overview

This client is a multi-state healthcare organization with employees across several time zones, including Alaska, Hawaii, the Pacific Northwest, and the Midwest. With a lean HR team and different benefit structures by geography, the organization needed a better way to help employees and family members access and understand benefits information.

Challenge

The client was offering a strong benefits package, but employees did not experience it that way. New hires were often directed to outdated or hard-to-use resources, family members struggled to find answers, and HR was left fielding confusion it did not have capacity to manage. The stakes were high because benefits dissatisfaction was showing up in onboarding and exit feedback, creating retention risk and undermining confidence in both HR and the broker relationship.

> The team combined practical problem-solving with ongoing responsiveness.

IMA's Strategy and Actions

IMA's employee benefits team acted to support the client by:

+ Assessing the prior benefits experience in detail, reviewing the existing site and identifying usability, accuracy, and branding gaps that were creating confusion.
+ Designing two separate benefits portals rather than forcing a one-size-fits-all solution, so Hawaii employees and mainland employees could each access the correct information for their plans.
+ Aligning the experience with the client's brand, visuals, and communication style to make the portals feel familiar, welcoming, and easier for employees to trust.
+ Testing draft content and navigation with both client stakeholders and everyday users to catch jargon, friction points, and confusing workflows before launch.
+ Expanding beyond the portal with interactive benefits-guide videos, recruiting materials, and mental health resource flyers to support year-round education and access.

Why It Worked

This approach worked because it started with discovery and stayed grounded in the end-user experience. Rather than simply posting documents online, IMA focused on how employees and family members would actually find, interpret, and use benefits information across time zones and life situations. The team also combined practical problem-solving with ongoing responsiveness, which helped rebuild trust over time.

Key Takeaways

This story shows the value of listening closely during onboarding and treating communication gaps as a strategic service issue, not just an administrative one. Other IMA teams can apply the same approach by using discovery to uncover pain points, tailoring solutions to workforce realities, and testing resources with non-expert users before rollout.

THE RESULT:

The client gained a more accessible, self-service benefits experience for employees and family members, while reducing routine benefits questions reaching HR and shifting that burden away from a small internal team. Just as importantly, the new experience increased trust in the benefits program and gave the client more confidence that employees would get timely, usable support.

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